



InTouch

www.montgomerycountymd.gov

August 2007

Understanding Diversity Through the Arts

The Committee for Ethnic Affairs (CEA), through the support of the Office of Community Partnerships, is dedicated to helping residents value the great diversity in our community. As a special activity, CEA sponsors an art contest every year to encourage Montgomery County middle school students to depict some aspects of their cultural heritage using any two-dimensional art media. All entries were displayed for the entire month of May in the Executive Office Building, and the winning framed artwork will be exhibited at different venues throughout Montgomery County. Participating students and schools received certificates of appreciation at a reception on May 17, 2007.

Best in Show: "The Emblem" by Suraj Mali, Grade 8
Art Teacher: Marilyn Hilly
Montgomery Village
Middle School



Artist's Statement:

"My poster depicts my culture, which is from the country of Nepal. This art replicates the kind of religious works that are sought after in my country. The various carvings that are prevalent in Nepal can be found in our temples. Very intricate and detailed thankas, as they are called, show the circle of life and various other religious ideas that are supported by Buddhism and Hinduism. In my artwork I tried to imitate the very detailed, colorful, and symmetrical aspects of the thankas. I added animals and nature to my poster as they are the main substance of the artistic carvings that decorate the multitude of temples in Nepal. I incorporated the art of my country to showcase the art of Nepal and my culture."

An Inclusive Workforce to Provide Responsive County Services

On April 4, 2007, Chief Administrative Officer Tim Firestone announced the creation of the Office of Human Resources Departmental Steering Committee. County Executive Isiah Leggett approved the steering committee and charged it with the task of overseeing and guiding departmental action plans to achieve his commitment to secure a diverse workforce capable of providing quality and timely services for all county residents. The formal establishment of the committee resulted from a Task Force Report and Recommendations submitted to County Executive Leggett by Latin American Advisory Committee and Office of Human Resources Task Force that included representatives from the African American Advisory Group and the Asian American Advisory Committee.

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In Touch is Changing

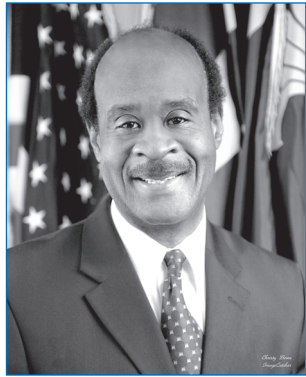
This will be the last quarterly edition of the *In Touch* newsletter. *In Touch* has been an important vehicle for conveying information to thousands of County residents and businesses about government and community events and initiatives. Times change, and the new Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) believes that we can reach more people in a more timely fashion by going to a twice-a-month email format.

Starting in September, the Office of Community Partnerships will launch an email edition of *In Touch* that will have all the information you have valued and more. Future emails will be sent on the second and fourth Fridays of each month.

We hope you will continue to subscribe. All you need to do is return the attached postcard with your name and email address. We would also appreciate your comments regarding information and topics you believe we should include. Alternatively, you may go to our website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/esubscription to register for our OCP emails. Please encourage your friends and associates to register. We hope to reach more people with our new format.

For those of you who do not have access to email, do not despair. Simply check-off the appropriate box, and we will mail you a copy of our every-other-week emails.

Message from County Executive Ike Leggett



ISIAH LEGGETT

Dear Friends:

It has been eight months since I took the oath of office to become your County Executive. I am proud of the team I have assembled to carry out my campaign pledge to "make a good government work even better" for our nearly one million County residents. Our leadership team is among the most talented and diverse of any local government in the nation. It is truly an All-Star team. Last month, these outstanding leaders came together for a two day retreat. As residents of Montgomery County, you would have been proud to see the spirit of good will and collaboration at that meeting.

In addition to putting our management team in place, the highest priority of the first months of our administration has been the adoption of our Fiscal Year 2008 (July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008) Operating Budget. We began the budget process faced with a gap of nearly \$200 million. The budget approved by the Council increases funding for the public schools, police, Fire & Rescue, prevention of youth violence, and support for families without health insurance. I am especially pleased that the Council fully funded my \$10 million increase in resources for the Montgomery Housing Initiative Fund to preserve and

expand our supply of affordable housing. We did all this while giving a \$613 tax credit to every owner-occupied household in the County, 80 percent of whom may actually pay less in property taxes than they did last year. My thanks to Council President Marilyn Praisner, Councilmembers, Council and Executive staff, and all the residents who took the time to communicate their thoughts to us.

I am pleased to welcome Bruce Adams back to County government as the Director of our Office of Community Partnerships. Bruce and I served together on the County Council from 1986 to 1994, and Bruce helped organize my Transition Team last Fall. The Office of Community Partnerships is responsible for building collaboration among communities to strengthen the quality of life of all County residents. The Office serves as a bridge between the community and my office, identifying areas of concern to the public that need my attention. The Office is charged with increasing the cultural competency of the County government workforce to better serve our increasingly diverse community, one of the key recommendations of my Transition Team. Working with our ethnic communities, non-profit and faith-based organizations, and other residents and businesses, the Office of Community Partnerships promotes volunteerism and other forms of civic engagement.

We are hard at work building a bigger table to allow a more inclusive and diverse community conversation about Montgomery County's future. Please take the opportunity to share your talents and ideas with your fellow residents of Montgomery County by attending a Town Hall Meeting, participating in our capital and operating budget forums, serving on a County advisory board or commission, or sending me an email with your thoughts.

Once again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you. Join me in working to make our great County an even better Community. Please feel free to call my office at 240/777-2500 or send me an email at ike.leggett@montgomerycountymd.gov. Together, we can accomplish great things!

With appreciation,

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Timothy Firestone, Chief Administrative Officer

Office of Community Partnerships:

Bruce Adams, Director

Cindy Chan, Asian Pacific American Liaison

Tina Clarke, African American/Black Liaison

Joe Heiney-Gonzalez, Latino/Hispanic Liaison

Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Office Services Coordinator

101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland 20850
240-777-2500 Fax: 240-777-2517

Submissions, comments and event announcements can be emailed to: InTouch@montgomerycountymd.gov. Articles may be reproduced or translated into other languages with attribution.

In Touch is free of charge and is published by the Office of Community Partnerships in the Offices of the County Executive, Montgomery County, Maryland. To be on the email list for future newsletters, please call 240-777-2500 or email InTouch@montgomerycountymd.gov

County Strengthens Partnerships with Nonprofit Agencies

On April 26, 2007 the Office of Community Partnerships convened representatives from the nonprofit sector to begin a working relationship focused on making Montgomery County the national best practice of a local government collaborating with its nonprofit partners, many of whom work with County government departments. Becky Wagner, Executive Director of Community Ministries of Montgomery County and the Co-chair for the Montgomery County Nonprofit Roundtable Formation Committee, participated in the meeting along with Linda Kahn, Administrative Director of IMPACT Silver Spring; Cynthia Price, Associate Director of YMCA Youth and Family Services; Sally Rudney, Executive Director of Montgomery County Community Foundation; Erica Serrano, Assistant Director of Centro Familia; and MaryAnn Holohean, Director of the Montgomery County Nonprofit Roundtable. County representatives included Bruce Adams, Director of the Office of Community Partnerships; David Dise, Director, Office of Procurement; Uma Ahluwalia, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services; Beryl Feinberg, Manager, Office of Budget and Management; Luann Korona, Chief, Community



Inaugural Brown Bag Lunch meeting of County government and nonprofit organizations. Harold McDougall, Community Service Fellow, Offices of the County Executive; Cindy Price, Associate Director, YMCA Youth and Family Services; Sharon Friedman, Executive Director, Montgomery County Mental Health Assoc.; Sue Kirk, Executive Director, Bethesda Cares.

Development Division of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs; Chuck Short, Special Assistant to the County Executive; Robert DeBernardis, Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer, and staff members of the Office of Community Partnerships.

Members agreed to form a special working group that will examine the current contracting, monitoring, financing and operations of County government arrangements with nonprofit agencies that deliver a range of services to County residents. The group will identify nuts-and-bolts issues that often hamper the effective delivery of services to

populations in need of County services. A June meeting was held to pursue initial discussions in the areas of County procurement policies, the grants and contracting processes, and to explore opportunities for capacity-building in order to strengthen partnerships between the County and the nonprofit sector. The goal of the working group is to achieve the maximum use of public and private nonprofit organizational resources that are available to serve Montgomery County's diverse and growing communities.

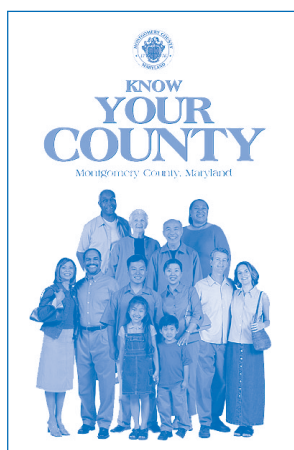
Know Your County Guide to Montgomery County Government

Know Your County is a guide to government in Montgomery County, Maryland. It is produced to offer the residents a greater understanding of the functioning of local government and the array of services it provides. This guide gives clear concise descriptions and contact information for government departments and agencies in Montgomery County.

Know Your County is the result of a collaboration between business (Discovery Communications, Inc. and Host Hotels & Resorts), government (The Offices of the County Executive, Office of Community Partnerships), and a private, non profit organization (The League of Women Voters and its Citizen Education Fund).

Because programs and services are constantly changing to meet current needs, information in the **Know Your County** guide is available on-line at Montgomery County's website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov and will be updated periodically. Links to English, Spanish and Chinese language versions of the guide are provided in Adobe PDF file format. If you should discover an error or have an addition to recommend, please send an email to:

KnowYourCounty.ResourceGuide@montgomerycountymd.gov



Office of Minority & Multicultural Health Services Department of Health & Human Services

The Office of Minority and Multicultural Health Services includes the African American Health Program, Latino Health Initiative, and the Asian American Health Initiative. These programs work in close coordination with community leaders and key stakeholders who advocate for access to health care for low-income residents; develop, implement and evaluate cultural competent strategies and programs to eliminate health disparities that disproportionately affect minorities; and work to enhance collaboration and coordination of efforts among existing County and nonprofit programs and services, including volunteer outreach workers and health promoters. For further information, please call:

African American Health Program	301-421-5445
Latino Health Initiative	240-777-1779
Asian American Health Initiative	240-777-4517

Office of Community Partnerships (OCP): Welcome from OCP Director Bruce Adams

In an effort to strengthen the County's capacity to build partnerships with community organizations and to increase the cultural competence of the County workforce, County Executive Ike Leggett has expanded the scope of the Office of Community Outreach and changed its name to the Office of Community Partnerships. It is my great good fortune to be able to serve you as the Director of the new Office.

Last Fall, I was honored to be asked by Ike Leggett to assist him in organizing his Transition Team. For me, the strongest message to come out of our transition work was the need to increase the cultural competence of our County workforce as we serve the multicultural Montgomery County of nearly one million people. This is the number one challenge and responsibility of our new Office of Community Partnerships.



BRUCE ADAMS

Montgomery!, the new organization committed to strengthening the non-profit and voluntary sector. We have organized several sessions between non-profit leaders and top County officials to improve the contracting process to encourage positive partnerships to serve our people.

The Volunteer Center is the final piece of the new Office of Community Partnerships. The Center, working in partnership with the Corporate Volunteer Council, has done impressive work in engaging County residents and businesses to serve our community with special programs for emergency preparedness, seniors, and students.

Andrea Jolly, the Center's guiding light, has just retired after two decades of service to the County. Ann Evans will serve as Acting Director in Andrea's place.

Despite Montgomery County's well deserved reputation as one of the nation's finest local governments, there are many unmet needs that cry out for action. In establishing the Office of Community Partnerships, County Executive Leggett recognized that government can not do it all and that new and creative partnerships will be essential to achieving his goals. The purpose of our office is to reach out to non-profit, faith-based, business, and other community organizations to work in partnership with the County government to fill service gaps and improve the quality of life of all of our residents.

The job of Director of the Office of Community Partnerships affords me a birds-eye view of just what a wonderful community we have created in Montgomery County. One Saturday afternoon this Spring, I had the privilege of attending the dedication of Roscoe Nix Elementary School in Silver Spring, named after one of the County's champions of civil rights and a hero of mine. In May, scores of young student artists demonstrated their talents at the Third Annual Diversity Through the Arts Exhibition at the Executive Office Building in Rockville. More recently I traveled to the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown to attend A Celebration of Corporate Partnerships, a showcase of non-profit and business partnerships organized by the Corporate Volunteer Council. And in late June, I watched Ike Leggett throw out the first nectarine at the grand opening of the Crossroads Farmers Market in Takoma Park, a phenomenal enterprise allowing immigrant farmers an opportunity to market fresh fruits and vegetables to families that rely on food stamps for their daily meals.

Montgomery County has the people and resources to become an international model of collaboration and partnership working to build a just and caring community. Please join us in this important work. I look forward to working with you.

Bruce Adams
Director, Office of Community Partnerships
Office of Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett
Office phone: 240/777-2558
bruce.adams@montgomerycountymd.gov

"In an increasingly diverse County of nearly one million people, identifying and understanding the cultural diversity of its residents in order to build an open, inviting, responsive, and accountable government for all is an essential challenge. The Leggett Administration is committed to executive leadership that builds a responsive government through new patterns of collaboration, participation, partnership, and governance that focus on setting goals, identifying service gaps and areas of needed improvement, establishing priorities, tracking progress, and responding promptly to the needs of residents, community organizations, and businesses."

—"Taking Charge... Making Change: The Transition of County Executive-Elect Ike Leggett"
November 8-December 4, 2006
To read the full text of the transition report, log onto www.montgomerycountymd.gov

County Executive Leggett and Chief Administrative Officer Tim Firestine are hosting three important Leadership Summits this Fall — one each for the African, Latino, and Asian communities — to allow our ethnic communities an opportunity to showcase their cultural heritage and present their issues to the top members of the Leggett Administration. As this issue of *In Touch* goes to the printer, each of the three communities is working hard to prepare for the Leadership Summits.

The Transition Team recommended the creation of an office of collaboration and partnerships "to promote and implement a new paradigm for working together with non-profits and community organizations." The budget approved by the Council calls for one additional liaison officer to work with the non-profit and faith-based communities starting in January of next year. Meanwhile, our office is working closely with Nonprofit

11th Annual Juneteenth Celebration “Amazing Grace”

On June 19, County Executive Isiah Leggett and County Council President Marilyn Praisner issued a joint proclamation marking the 11th Annual Juneteenth celebration in Montgomery County. The Offices of the County Executive, the Office of Community Partnerships, and the African-American community of Montgomery County shared a spectacular evening of entertainment, friends, and a Juneteenth feast at the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown. Approximately 300 people attended.



The Finest! Youth Performance Troupe performed at the Juneteenth Celebration.

Although President Lincoln had issued his Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, the end of slavery was a gradual process, and freedom day was celebrated on various dates in a variety of ways throughout the south and west. Juneteenth celebrates freedom day for the slaves in east Texas. On June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger and federal troops landed in Galveston, Texas with the mission of

ensuring the release of slaves from their owners. Slave owners from all over the south had brought slaves to east Texas because they feared the slaves would be freed and the slave owners' investment would be lost. The most popular legend explaining the date of the celebration was that news of the Emancipation was withheld to ensure harvesting of the last crop. According to another legend, the news was delayed because the messenger was murdered.

Where does the name Juneteenth come from? It is thought to be a nickname—first called nineteenth (for June 19) and then becoming Juneteenth. One story of how Juneteenth began is legendary. An ex-Union Negro soldier rode a mule from Washington, D.C., to Oklahoma with a message given to him by President Lincoln. Upon arriving in Oklahoma on June 19, he informed the slaves that they were free; from there, he rode on to Arkansas and Texas.

Fall Leadership Summits: Building Cultural Competency



Asian Americans preparing for the October 23rd Summit.

The central role of the County Executive's three ethnic advisory committees is to identify community issues that require the attention of County government and to advise County Executive Isiah Leggett how departments can achieve greater responsiveness and accountability in serving the needs of a very diverse population. The task of improving greater responsive and accountability in County government is one of seven strategic policy recommendations that emerged from the County Executive Transition Team. The Transition Report *Taking Charge...Making Change* can be found on the county website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov

Working with the Chairs and the members of the African American Advisory Group, the Asian American Advisory Committee, and the Latin American Advisory Committee, plans are underway to conduct community leadership summits that will identify key priorities of concern. Each advisory committee is calling upon its constituent group to develop background reports that will outline important issues to be presented to County

Executive Leggett and department directors. These reports will help to gain understanding and greater awareness of the unique challenges and opportunities of the ethnic groups who make up the largest and most diverse County in the state of Maryland. Each advisory committee will reach out to its respective community and examine demographic trends along with other factors such as social, health, educational, economic, and public safety issues needing greater attention by County departments.

County Executive Leggett, department directors, the representatives from the ethnic advisory committees and community participants will attend the three Leadership Summits. The scheduled events are:

- Latin American Community: Tuesday, September 25, 2007
Staff contact: Joe Heiney-Gonzalez – 240-777-2525
- Asian American Community: Tuesday, October 23, 2007
Staff contact: Cindy Chan – 240-777-2524
- African Heritage Communities: Tuesday, December 11, 2007
Staff contact: Tina Clarke – 240-777-2523



Montgomery County Latino Issues Summit (Photo by: Jorge Ribas)

Affordable Housing Task Force: Tools and Strategies to Increase Housing Availability

County Executive Isiah Leggett has appointed the Affordable Housing Task Force, charging the 35-member group to focus on finding tools and strategies to increase the availability of affordable housing in the county. Co-chairs of the task force are Richard Nelson, Director of the County's Department of Housing and Community Affairs and Barbara Goldberg Goldman, founder of the Affordable Housing Conference.

Illustrating his commitment to the issue of affordable housing, County Executive Leggett included an investment in his FY08 budget of nearly \$30 million in the Montgomery Housing Initiative Fund (MHI) for acquisition and rehabilitation of the county's affordable housing stock which represents more than a 50 percent increase over last year's funding.

"Montgomery County is a national leader on the issue of affordable housing," said the County Executive, "but the current economy and surge in property values demands that we put extra emphasis on finding safe, decent and affordable housing for those who want to live in our community. This task force has the talent and experience to help us move forward more effectively in this area."

A final report from the group is due in October 2007.

Inclusive Workforce *continued from page 1*

Members the steering committee are: Joe Adler, Director of the Office of Human Resources, who will serve as Chair; Fariba Kassiri, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer representing CAO Tim Firestine; the directors of the Police Department, Department of Fire and Rescue Services, the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, the Department of Public Works and Transportation and the Department of Health and Human Services. The five departments participating on the committee collectively hire 80 percent of the total County workforce. Joe Heiney-Gonzalez, Latino/Hispanic Liaison, Office of Community Partnerships, serves as staff to the committee.

The committee will analyze the County's personnel and initiate appropriate actions to ensure that the County workforce is inclusive and capable of serving our diverse, multicultural and multilingual populations. The committee is working on the following tasks:

- Baseline assessments of the five departments' personnel configurations with respect to diversity; assessment of a three- to five-year analysis of personnel requirements and recruitment strategies that are required to maintain a diverse County workforce.
- Design and implement targeted plans for recruitment and training of qualified candidates focusing on under-represented groups who are needed to fill entry-level, mid-level and manager-level positions in County government.
- Evaluate the targeted recruitment and training strategies that are implemented in all County departments in order to determine the achieved results and changes needed to ensure an inclusive and diverse County workforce.
- Submit status reports to the Chief Administrative Officer and the County Executive that will track the progress achieved by the Office of Human Resources Departmental Steering Committee.

For more information about the Office of Human Resources Departmental Steering Committee you may contact Joe Heiney-Gonzalez at joe.heiney-gonzalez@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Tom Pogue of the Community Outreach Forum and Department of Public Works and Transportation



TOM POGUE

Tom Pogue loves telling residents about the services the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) delivers! He proudly points to a pamphlet about the department that lists some 75 services his huge department is responsible for. Since becoming manager of the department's Community Outreach office in 2001 he has distributed almost 120,000 copies of his *Residents' Guide To Services*. He had the brochure translated into

Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean. "I love the diversity of Montgomery County — it's a sign of a healthy urban community and is a strength we should cultivate," he notes.

Tom grew up in a very non-diverse suburb of Indianapolis. He started college at Purdue University, but after two years he became increasingly restless with Purdue's homogeneity. "We had about 120 African American students out of a student body of more than 20,000," he recalls. It was during the turbulent 60s, but Purdue was quite conservative — no long hair, no anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, a lot like that suburban neighborhood he had come from. He remembers meeting Robert Kennedy while serving on his local presidential campaign. "When Kennedy was killed, it was a shock and I decided at that point to make some changes."

Tom joined DPWT 28 years ago doing studies in its transportation planning office. His interest in environmental issues prompted him to help start the County's initial ridesharing promotion program back in 1980. He spent several decades promoting alternate transportation, including helping to establish a series of Transportation Management Districts that now partner with employers in the five urban centers of the County to encourage the use of carpools, vanpools, and transit, as well as biking and walking. He played a significant role in creating the Fare Share transit discount programs and the Commuter Express transit store that continue today.

As Community Relations Manager for the department, Tom helps communicate to the public a broad array of messages, from why Highway Services uses a new Chip Seal procedure for road resurfacing to the importance of recycling. Additional outreach efforts include the department's website. "Every few days I post a DPWT News announcement on our home page—a sort of mini-press release on an upcoming public meeting, new project, or service reminder." Tom now also tapes a weekly 60-second spot on County Cable that runs every half hour during the department's rush hour camera broadcasts. He has done more than 125 segments over the past three years.

Tom represents DPWT to serve as a member of the Community Outreach Forum (COF). COF is organized by Office of Community Partnerships and has a membership of 72 representatives from County departments, related government entities and nonprofit agencies. Forum members share timely information about community concerns, collaborate on responses to issues identified as priorities by County residents and maximize the use of County resources.

To learn more about DPWT programs and services, please call Community Outreach Office at 240-777-7155 or email your questions to dpwt.outreach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Recruiting Volunteers for Emergency Response and Recovery: Montgomery County Volunteer Center

Are you prepared for an emergency? Every person in Montgomery County and around the nation should be prepared for emergencies including hurricanes, snow storms, and terrorist attacks. It is necessary for individuals and families to have an emergency preparedness plan in place in advance of a crisis or unforeseen circumstances. Montgomery County can utilize the Roam Secure Alert Network to contact residents during emergencies. When an incident occurs, authorized senders can notify you using Alert Montgomery on all your devices at once such as email accounts, cell phones and text pagers. This is your personal connection to updates and instructions on where to go, what to do, what not to do, who to contact and other important information. For information on how to be prepared and how to register for Alert Montgomery, please visit the Montgomery County government's home page at www.montgomerycountymd.gov and sign up at alert.montgomerycountymd.gov

Once you are personally prepared, there are several ways in which you may volunteer to help others in the event of an emergency. The Montgomery County Volunteer Center is recruiting individuals to join:

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) - a volunteer organization comprised of health professionals who can assist their community during public health emergencies. MRC's membership includes pharmacists, doctors, nurses, dentists, veterinarians, physician assistants and others who work in the

health field. The MRC will work with local health clinics, assist with flu vaccinations and help with local health events.

Emergency Action Team (EAT) – a group of individuals who are available to assist in emergencies in any non-licensed capacity in which they are needed. Periodic trainings give the EAT the general skills and awareness that they need to be effective when they are activated. Members will help out in a variety of ways, including answering phones on emergency hotlines, operating volunteer mobilization centers or helping in shelters.

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) – proactive citizens who are interested in becoming Community Safety Advocates and front-line assistants during large emergencies. CERT participants will attend training to acquire knowledge and enhance public safety of their communities.

Language Bank – a group of bilingual volunteers who are on-call to translate or interpret during emergencies. Language Bank volunteers assist in providing language services to area residents with Limited English proficiency.

If you are interested in volunteering for emergency response and recovery, please visit the website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer or call 240-777-2600.

CommunityEvents

Understanding Diversity through the Arts

Award winning student artwork exhibit schedule
The Rockville Public Library
July 2 – August 31, 2007
Montgomery College, Rockville Campus
September 3 - 21, 2007
The Mansion at Strathmore, North Bethesda
October 1 – 31, 2007

Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from **September 15th through October 15th** with many different activities throughout the County. The Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) in conjunction with the Montgomery County Public Libraries holds education and arts events in local libraries. The OCP and the Dept. of Health and Human Services cosponsor an annual Health Festival which provides health screenings and health education services to residents. The OCP and the Montgomery County Hispanic Employees Associations in cooperation with several nonprofit agencies offer various community events celebrating the contributions of the Latino immigrant communities. Call Joe Heiney-Gonzalez at 240-777-2525 for more information.

Montgomery County Housing Fair & Financial Fitness Day Saturday, September 15, 2007, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Activity Center at Bohrer Park, Gaithersburg

You will learn about buying, renting & keeping your first home; managing your money & credit; increasing your earning power through education; and home safety, utility assistance and conservation. Entertainment, food, prizes and activities for children! **Free admission! Free credit reports!** Call Myriam Torrico at 240-777-3627 for more information.

Community Service Day

On October 27, 2007, thousands of volunteers will be matched with hundreds of projects on this weekend event designed to offer the opportunity to everyone in Montgomery County to get out and make a difference! Any agency or organization interested in developing a project on these days should call the Montgomery County Volunteer Center at 240-777-2600 or email: volunteer@montgomerycountymd.gov

Office of Community Outreach
Offices of County Executive Isiah Leggett
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

County Executive's Workforce Diversity Initiative

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History of Namoorah Family Recipe

Ingredients for Namoorah:

2 lbs. Semolina
½ tsp baking soda
1 C plain yogurt
whole or chopped almonds

1 C milk
2 lbs sugar
½ C water

Ingredients for Syrup:

2½ C water
juice from ½ fresh lemon

3 lbs sugar

Preparing for Namoorah: In a good size bowl, put in Semolina, sugar, baking soda, milk and yogurt. Hand mix ingredients together and gradually add water. Grease the bottom and sides of round pan (16" in diameter) with butter. Pour in mixture. Place almonds on top of mixture as if Namoorah is already cut in square sections. Let mixture rest for 5 hours. Preheat oven to 500°F. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes. While the Namoorah is baking, prepare syrup.

Preparing for Syrup: In a saucepan bring water to boil. Mix in sugar. Add lemon juice. Continue to stir until mixture starts to thicken.

Pour the warm syrup on top of the baked Namoorah. Cut into squares and serve. Enjoy!

The Muslim Women in the Arts (MWIA) exhibition was sponsored by the Office of Community Partnerships, Offices of the County Executive and MWIA. MWIA is a volunteer group for Muslim women artists in any media whose main purpose is to enhance and promote the highest quality of art and to educate the general public about the creativity

and talent of women artists. At the reception, Hannan Sinnokrot brought a delicious dessert that was enjoyed by many artists and guests. People asked Hannan to share the secret of her recipe and she has generously and graciously let us publish the making of this mouth-watering dessert Namoorah.

Hannan's great-great grandfather, Musa Uthman, born in Nabulis, West Bank, created the recipe for Namoorah. He passed the recipe to great grandfather Musa who traveled throughout the Middle East sharing this tasty dessert. The recipe was then passed to grandfather Amin, next to father Deeb and afterwards to Hannan. Hannan plans to teach this family recipe to her eight grandchildren. In Iraq, Namoorah is known as Basboosa, in Lebanon it is called Harisa.

"I hope you will enjoy this dessert as much as my family has and many others all over the world," said Hannan Sinnokrot.



Hannan Sinnokrot plans to pass the family's Namoorah recipe to her grandchildren.